

# **Graduate Handbook | Doctoral Program in History**

## **Carleton University | Department of History | 2024-25**

### **Ph.D. in History: Contents**

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## 1. Program Requirements at a Glance

Requirement	PhD History	PhD History with Concentration in Public History	Year (based on full-time study)
Historical Theory	HIST 6808 (1.0 cr) – Historical Theory and Method		Yr 1 Fall / Winter (usually)
Major Field	HIST 6906 (0.5 cr)- PhD Tutorials in a defined major field (X3)	HIST 6906 (0.5 cr) – PhD Tutorials in Public History (X 3)	Yr 1 Fall / Winter / Summer
Comprehensive Exam	HIST 6907 (0.5 cr) – Comp Exam	HIST 6908 (0.5 cr) – Comp Exam in Public History	Yr 2 September
Cognate Courses	Cognate coursework outside of the major field (1.0 credits)*		Yr 2 Fall / Winter (usually)
Professional Development	HIST 6805 (0.5 Credit) Professional Dev I HIST 6806 (0.5 Credit) Professional Dev II	HIST 6809 (0.5 cr) – Internship Prep HIST 6810 (0.5 cr) - Internship	Yr 2
Proposal	Dissertation Proposal		Yr 2 April
Dissertation	HIST 6909 - PhD Dissertation (0.0 cr)		Yr 2 Summer Yrs 3 - 5/6

\*Note: Students in the PhD History with Collaborative Specialization in Political Economy replace the cognate coursework with PECO 6000 (0.5 cr) and HIST 6701 (0.5 cr), and the topic of the dissertation must be in the area of specialization. See the graduate calendar for full details.

## 2. HIST 6808 Doctoral Seminar in Historical Theory and Method

All students in the Ph.D. program enroll in the *Doctoral Seminar in Historical Theory and Method* (HIST 6808), normally in their first year of study. HIST 6808 is sometimes offered in alternate years. When HIST 6808 is taken in Year One, the Cognate Area will be completed in Year Two. When HIST 6808 is completed in Year Two, the Cognate Area will be completed in Year One. The seminar introduces students to the critical study of theories, concepts and methodological approaches that shape historical practice. It normally meets every second week in both Fall Term and Winter Term. When students enrol in HIST 6808 in Year Two, the course commences after September 25, i.e. after the completion of all components of the Comprehensive Examination.

## YEAR ONE

### 3. Language Requirement

All students must demonstrate a reading proficiency in a language other than English allied to their program of study. For students of Canadian history proficiency in French is normally required. For students in other areas of study the appropriate language requirement will be determined in conjunction with their program supervisor and the Graduate Supervisor. Proficiency is normally demonstrated through completion of the departmental language exam or a specified number of course credits. Language proficiency requirements must be met by the end of the student's second year of study. A French exam (which consists of translation and reading comprehension) is offered in

the first week of September. If this proves too challenging, we can recommend students take FINS 2105, a French written comprehension course.

#### **4. Faculty Program Advisor and Dissertation Supervisors**

Upon admission to the program students will be assigned a faculty program advisor(s) in their area of study. The faculty program advisor will normally also serve as the student's dissertation supervisor. The program advisor is responsible for organizing the student's **Plan of Study** and **Major Field Tutorials**. The advisor also establishes the comprehensive examination and dissertation advisory committees.

The role of the dissertation supervisor is to provide constructive feedback to work submitted by the student in a timely manner, normally within three weeks. Where feedback cannot be provided within three weeks, the delay must be handled in consultation with the student. Supervisors are expected to maintain regular communication and consultation with students, and available for regular and timely consultations with students and to provide notification of lengthy absences and the support mechanisms available under these circumstances. Supervisors are expected to continue supervision when on sabbatical or other type of non-medical leave, or to assist the student in arranging for supervision during the period of the leave. Supervisors will also assist students in seeking financial support, especially in writing letters of good quality in support of scholarship and fellowship applications. Supervisors will convene meetings of the advisory committee, and agree with the student on a reasonable schedule for the completion of each portion of the research and dissertation. A more in-depth description of the roles and responsibilities of dissertation supervisors is available on the Graduate Studies website: <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/graduate-supervision-responsibilities-expectations-policy/>

#### **5. Plan of Study**

Over the course of the summer prior to the first year of doctoral study, students should consult with their faculty advisor(s) to establish a plan of doctoral study for the first year. This Plan of Study should describe the area of the student's **Major field** (see section 6 below), and the proposed field of the **Cognate Area** (see section 7 below). It should also indicate the supervisors of the Major and Cognate fields and the mechanisms (courses, directed studies, internships, etc.) that will be used to deliver both fields. Ideally faculty program advisors should communicate the proposed subject area of the Major Field Tutorials and of the Cognate Area to the Graduate Supervisor by **August 1**, in order to co-ordinate the creation of tutorials and courses across individual student programs. It is recognized that a student's Plan of Study is subject to change and that it may be necessary to update the plan from time to time. A template for the Plan of Study will be made available to students in July prior to their first year.

#### **6. Major Field Tutorials**

Students normally enroll in HIST 6906 Major Field Tutorials in each of the Fall, Winter, and Summer Terms of their first year of doctoral study. The purpose of the Major Field Tutorials is to introduce students to the historiography and recent developments in their major field of study. For students in the Concentration in Public History, the Major Field is required to be Public History. The tutorials will be coordinated by a faculty member specialist in the major field, normally with the participation of other members of faculty and, where appropriate, faculty in other Carleton units and/or at other universities. In consultation with their program advisor and Graduate Supervisor, students may enroll in 5000- and 6000-level graduate courses in partial fulfillment of the Major Field requirements. As with other elements of the doctoral program, tutorials are student-led and oriented. The

organization of the tutorials varies according to the needs of each student and the field of study. Departmental best practice aims to incorporate the following elements:

- a regular schedule of meetings to discuss assigned readings with faculty tutorial facilitators either individually or in small groups
- short written work such as literature reviews, reading reports, short papers, or other work appropriate to the field and level of study, may be a part of the tutorial, to be agreed upon in advance and articulated in writing
- written components that contribute to the student's preparation for the comprehensive exam
- designate a format for the written component of the Comprehensive Exam, to be communicated in writing to the Graduate Supervisor
- generate a list of titles of monographs and articles appropriate to the field (60–80 titles) for inclusion in the Comprehensive Exam (copy forwarded to the Graduate Supervisor no later than August 1 at the conclusion of Year One)

## **7. Cognate Area**

All students must complete 1.0 credits in a Cognate Area that complements their major field of study. The Cognate Area is intended to introduce breadth to the student's program of study. This may be defined as: geographical breadth in terms of historical training in an area of the world outside of the geographical concentration of the major field; topical breadth in defined or emerging fields of inquiry (such as women, gender, and sexuality, labour history, migration and diaspora studies, queer theory, etc.); methodological breadth in training in a specific methodological subfield that stretches the student's capabilities (such as quantitative analysis, digital history, oral history, public history, etc.); interdisciplinary breadth in terms of training in a discipline or unit outside of history; or some combination of these. The field may be composed of: directed studies; one or more graduate courses offered by the department or other programs at Carleton, the University of Ottawa, or other accredited institutions; specialized courses (e.g. an intensive summer course) at other accredited institutions worldwide; or some combination of these. The nature of the Cognate Area is determined jointly by the student, their faculty program advisor, and the Graduate Supervisor and is included in the student's Plan of Study. In consultation with their program advisor and the Graduate Supervisor students enroll in appropriate 5000- or 6000-level courses offered by the Department of History, or other units at Carleton, the University of Ottawa, or elsewhere. A list of existing Ph.D. courses in the department that may contribute to the Cognate Area is available in the [Graduate Calendar](#) (see 6100–6700, 6901 and 6903).

The Cognate Area is normally completed by the second year of doctoral study (sometimes even after the Comprehensive Exams). Departmental best practice aims to incorporate the following elements:

- a regular schedule of meetings with field supervisors either individually or in small groups
- routine written work such as literature reviews, reading reports, short papers, or other work appropriate to the field and level of study, to be agreed upon in advance and articulated in writing
- a written summative project that lays groundwork for aspects of the dissertation research

## **YEAR TWO**

## **8. Comprehensive Examination**

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to assess students' facility with the Major Field of study pertinent to their dissertation research. The exam has both written and oral components.

**8.1 Written Comprehensive Examination.** The form of the written component is flexible and is to be agreed upon in advance by the student and field supervisor. The written component may include any of the following:

- a 5 hour written examination responding to set questions (e.g. 6–8 questions, student answers 3)
- a take-home exam with set questions (similar structure; student has 10 days to complete)
- the preparation of a course syllabus that includes: a detailed course outline on the Carleton template, an annotated bibliography for each week, 2–3 sample lectures, and a mock exam with sample answers
- a series of 3–4 short papers addressing questions established jointly by the student and the field supervisor; to be written in intervals over a one-month period, with the final paper submitted no later than 10 days after the beginning of term.

All components of the written examination are to be completed within 10 days of the start of Fall Term of the student's second year of doctoral study. Faculty members are asked for their cooperation in relieving students of major TA duties such as grading, leading tutorials and the like prior to their comp exam. The examination is graded on a Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory basis. If graded Satisfactory, students proceed to the oral examination. If graded Unsatisfactory, students must re-sit the exam by December 1. The written examination is assessed by the field coordinator(s) and at least one other member of the oral examination committee. All members of the examination committee will have access to the student's written examination materials.

**8.2 Oral Comprehensive Examination.** The oral examination is scheduled no less than 10 days after the submission of the final components of the written examination. The oral examination is based on the written examination, together with a Major Field List of 60–80 titles (including both articles and monographs) established during the Major Field Tutorials. The list should be submitted to the Graduate Supervisor by August 1 at the end of the first year. The oral examination is administered by an examination board composed of the student's dissertation supervisor(s) and 3–4 faculty members. Depending on the field of study, committee members may be drawn from external departments, institutions, or include other qualified individuals with demonstrated expertise as approved by the Graduate Committee. The oral examination normally lasts 2–3 hours.

Procedures for the oral examination are as follows:

- 1) The examination chair (normally the Graduate Supervisor) calls the examination to session and reviews exam procedures with the student and the examination committee. The student is asked to leave for a brief period while the committee reviews the order of questioning.
- 2) In the first round of questions, each examiner poses questions related to the written examination. Each examiner has 10–15 minutes to ask questions in a one-on-one exchange. Other committee members are asked to withhold comments at this juncture.
- 3) In the second round of questions, each examiner may pose follow-up questions, including questions related more generally to the Field List. Examiners follow the same order, but other members of the board may interject, add comments, or ask follow-up questions to student

responses. This stage of the examination is meant to function more as a seminar, with a less formal structure than the first round.

4) Students will be asked to leave the examination room while the committee deliberates.

5) If students require a brief pause in proceedings, this may be requested at any point of the examination chair.

The oral examination is graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. If there are concerns with a student's performance, the examination is graded 'Unsatisfactory' and the student can elect to re-sit the exam six months later. Students who do not pass a second time must make a formal appeal to remain in the program.

After the successful completion of all Comprehensive Examination requirements, the student completes a Doctoral Progress Report outlining the program of study for the remainder of Year Two. The student's first progress report is normally submitted to the Graduate Supervisor and Graduate Studies by November 1 of Year Two.

### **9. Professional Development Project / Internship**

PhD students undertake a professional development project (1.0 credits) that enhances and complements their program of study and career goals. The Doctoral Portfolio (above) is integral to the process of undertaking the professional development project or internship. The nature of the professional development project is flexible and is to be determined jointly by the student, their dissertation advisor, and the Graduate Supervisor. Projects may include (but are not limited to):

- scholarly work other than original knowledge creation, i.e. translation, scholarly editions
- written elements intended for non-academic audiences, including reports, policy papers, op-eds
- other elements intended for non-academic audiences, including gigamaps, descriptions of knowledge mobilization activities, etc.
- oral histories
- the preparation of an article-length essay for submission for academic publication
- an internship of usually four months duration with an external agency, institution or other partner (internships are normally paid)
- a curatorial project at Carleton or with an external partner
- creative works, including novels, graphics, performances, exhibitions, installations, murals, festivals, interactive digital works, film
- new curricula, teaching modules, or undergraduate course designs
- combinations of the above, delivered in an integrated medium such as a website

In addition to the project output, the completion of the professional development project (HIST 6805 and HIST 6806, or another approved course) should incorporate a summative description and reflection incorporated into the student's portfolio. The professional project is normally completed in the student's second year of study.

Students in the Public History Concentration have a more limited range of professional development options, and are required to take HIST 6809- Internship in Applied History Preparation and HIST 6810 - Internship in Applied History. It is expected that the internship undertaken at the PhD level will be paid and involve some level of project management or significant outcome related to public

history. The timing of internships may vary depending on the partner institution and available funding.

Professional development courses are graded Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory.

## **10. The Doctoral Portfolio**

In conjunction with their Professional Development Project or Internship, each student creates a digital portfolio. The portfolio houses various kinds of written, visual, and digital materials. As students move through the program, they use their portfolio to collect and access materials such as their coursework output, Plan of Study, summative assignments, comprehensive exam list, thesis proposal, funding applications, professional development project materials, and thesis chapter drafts. The Graduate Supervisor, the student's thesis advisor(s), and members of the comprehensive exam and thesis advisory committees will have access to some or all of these materials. The role of the portfolio is to augment the coherence of the individual student's program of study and to provide oversight, guidance, and support for students throughout the cycle of doctoral study. In later years of the program, the portfolio also serves as a platform to showcase student achievements to potential employers. Students will be provided with support and, where necessary, appropriate training (such as website design, etc.) for creating and maintaining their portfolios.

## **11. Dissertation Proposal**

The first draft of the dissertation proposal is normally due to the dissertation supervisor(s) at the beginning of the Winter term of the second year of study (i.e. January). The length of the finished proposal should be about 15 pages (maximum) of double-spaced text, plus a bibliography of key works and primary sources (5-10 pages, maximum). It should identify and briefly explain a topic of historical study; pose some important research questions that will inform the student's approach to the future research they intend to carry out; explain how, by answering those questions, the student's work will enter into existing scholarly conversations; indicate which primary sources the student intends to consult in order to answer these questions; and how they will use those primary sources (for example, by applying quantitative network analysis, engaging in qualitative cultural analysis of texts etc.). Proposals should also contain a proposed timeline for the dissertation and a hypothetical chapter breakdown. It takes thoughtful preliminary research and reading of primary and secondary sources to generate a meaningful dissertation proposal that will propel the researcher into a deeper stage of research, reading, and writing. It is unlikely that students will carry out their proposal plans to the letter – it is expected that projects will continue to evolve throughout the research and writing process. Students should keep in mind that the goal of this assignment is not to produce a 'perfect' proposal but to convince others that they will be carrying out important and well-informed dissertation research in a competent fashion.

## **12. Dissertation Advisory Committee**

Once a draft of the proposal is completed (ideally by the beginning of the Winter semester in the second year of study), a Dissertation Advisory Committee will be established to provide guidance and support throughout the proposal, researching, and writing process. The committee will normally include the dissertation supervisor(s) plus 2–3 faculty members, from history or other departments, selected by the supervisor(s) in consultation with the Graduate Supervisor and the student. Committee members may change as the project evolves or when faculty members are unavailable due to sabbatical leave, etc. The role of individual faculty members of the committee is flexible and will vary according to the needs of the student, the contours of the project, and the area of faculty expertise.

Once the Dissertation Advisory Committee has been established and the final version of the proposal completed, the Graduate Supervisor will circulate the dissertation proposal to the members of the Dissertation Advisory Committee. Its members are asked to furnish written comments and suggestions, proposing alternate directions for the project, etc., within one month of receiving the proposal. Committee members may wish to consider the following factors when assessing if the proposed dissertation research:

- 1) is situated within an identifiable historical context;
- 2) is located within a relevant historiographical or theoretical framework that reaches beyond the particular confines of the research topic;
- 3) has a primary research plan in place that can deliver answers to the proposal's implicit or explicit research questions;
- 4) will produce a dissertation commensurate with the student's long-term career goals.

Students should aim to have the final version of their dissertation proposal completed by April 30 of their second year of study. The proposal should be uploaded to the student's portfolio and submitted to the Graduate Supervisor together with a Dissertation Proposal Submission Form (available [here](#)) by the dissertation supervisor.

## **YEAR THREE AND FORWARD**

### **13. Dissertation**

Technically, the dissertation begins when students register in HIST 6909 (the number we give to the Dissertation) in the summer of Year 2 once the proposal has been approved by the Dissertation Committee. The dissertation is the major research requirement and capstone for the PhD. It is based on extensive research and must advance an original historiographical interpretation. Traditionally, the dissertation has come in the form of a written argumentative thesis, between 250-350 pages including bibliography. Our program is open to PhD projects that incorporate other forms of academic output. These may include audio, video, performative, or digital elements. The form of the dissertation output will be agreed upon in consultation with the Graduate Committee, dissertation supervisor(s), and the student. The procedures and criteria of evaluation for non-traditional forms of academic output will be articulated in advance and communicated to the student in writing. Whatever the form, students will provide supervisors with drafts/versions of the dissertation for comments and feedback prior to the final submission. This sequence of submitting drafts and getting feedback normally happens chapter-by-chapter. To facilitate the production of the dissertation, the program has a number of "check-in" moments built in to help students complete their work. These are the Dissertation Proposal (discussed above), and the Dissertation Advisory Meetings and Doctoral Progress Reports in subsequent years (discussed below). The Dissertation Defence happens at the very end of this process and is the final assessment of the dissertation.

### **14. Dissertation Advisory Meetings and Annual Doctoral Progress Reports**

Beginning in September of the third year of study, the Dissertation Advisory Committee should meet with the student to review progress, offer feedback of chapter drafts, and assist with the next steps of research and writing. Students should aim to have a major deliverable (such as a chapter draft) to submit for discussion at the meeting of the committee. After the meeting a Doctoral Progress Report (available from your supervisor or the Graduate Supervisor), signed by the student and all members



of the Dissertation Advisory Committee, should be submitted to the Graduate Supervisor and Graduate Studies. The progress report should be submitted by October 15 of each year.

### **15. Submission of the Dissertation**

The dissertation will only be accepted for examination after the dissertation supervisor(s) has determined it is ready to be examined. A full draft of the dissertation must be made available to examiners at least four weeks before the scheduled defence.

In addition to the content of the dissertation meeting your supervisor(s)' expectations for examination, they must also conform to the technical requirements established by Graduate Studies, details that can be viewed here: <http://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/>

Information about Electronic Thesis Deposit (ETD) is available on the Graduate Studies website here: <http://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/electronic/>

### **16. Dissertation Examination Committee**

The dissertation supervisor(s) determines the composition of the dissertation examining committee in conjunction with the Graduate Supervisor. The committee is comprised of the supervisor(s), two other faculty members from the History Department (normally from the Dissertation Advisory Committee), one "internal-external" examiner normally drawn from another department at Carleton (or sometimes the University of Ottawa), and one "external" examiner from another institution. Graduate Studies assigns a Defence Committee Chair from outside the department. The role of the Chair is purely administrative and they do not assess the dissertation. This committee is given a minimum of four weeks in advance of the defence to read the dissertation and provide their assent that the dissertation may proceed to examination. The External Examiner's report, sent to Graduate Studies, will be shared with committee members and the supervisor no less than 5 days prior to the defence. The supervisor is permitted to share the External Examiner's report with the student.

### **17. Dissertation Defence**

All dissertations are defended before the examining committee. Observers may attend the exam if they have received the permission of the candidate and the Chair of the Examination Board beforehand. Observers, when present, may not ask questions or participate in any other way. After being introduced to the committee the student briefly leaves the defence while procedures are reviewed with members of the committee.

The student returns, and after a brief review of procedures, gives a brief presentation (10–15 minutes) that highlights the dissertation and its contributions. Remember that the committee members are keen to get started and that you will have plenty of time to speak during the examination.

In the first round of questions, each examiner is given approximately 10 minutes to have a one-on-one conversation with the student about the dissertation. The external examiner, who always goes first, is usually given leeway to ask questions for a slightly longer period of time (i.e. 15–20 minutes). Questions can be broad or specific, addressing such things as argumentation, the selection and use of evidence, theory, method, and historiography (to name only some).

In a second round of questioning, the examination is more like a seminar. One examiner poses a question but other examiners can join in the conversation with the student. After the second round, the student leaves the room and the committee goes into deliberations about the assessment. Bear in mind that the ultimate format of the defence is set at the discretion of the examination Chair, and procedures may vary slightly.

There are two assessments. The first is of the defence itself, which is graded either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The second is of the dissertation, also graded either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Students who receive a 'Satisfactory' assessment will normally be required to do some revisions to the dissertation before it is deposited to Carleton University Library and Library and Archives Canada. These revisions can range from the minor (typos and brief revisions) to major (the re-writing or addition of sections, e.g.). Revisions must be approved by the dissertation supervisor(s) (or the examining committee in the case of major revisions) before the dissertation can be formally deposited. If a student receives a grade of 'Unsatisfactory' they will normally be required to withdraw from the program, unless the Examining Committee recommends to the Vice-Provost of Graduate Studies that the student be permitted to make revisions and resubmit the dissertation six months after the original examination.

### 18. Residence Requirement

The normal residence requirement for the Ph.D. degree is a minimum of two years of full-time study.

### 19. Summary timelines for full-time doctoral students (Table version)

Year	Term 1 (Fall)	Term 2 (Winter)	Term 3 (Summer)
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ HIST 6808 Historical Theory &amp; Method</li> <li>▶ Major Field Tutorials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ HIST 6808 Historical Theory &amp; Method</li> <li>▶ Major Field Tutorials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Major Field Tutorials</li> </ul>
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Comprehensive Exam</li> <li>▶ Cognate Area Coursework</li> <li>▶ Professional Development Project 1/Internship preparation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Cognate Area Coursework</li> <li>▶ Professional Development Project 2/ Internship [ Dissertation Proposal? ]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ HIST 6909</li> </ul>
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Research and writing of dissertation</li> </ul>		
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Research and writing of dissertation</li> </ul>		
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Research and writing of dissertation</li> <li>▶ Dissertation submission and defence</li> </ul>		

## 20. Key program dates and suggested timeliness (List version)

### Year One

- August 1      ▶ Major Field and Cognate Area subjects to be communicated to Graduate Supervisor
- September 30      ▶ Program of Study Plan submitted to Graduate Supervisor
- ▶ Major Field Tutorial and Cognate Area schedule of meetings available to students
- ▶ Major Field Tutorial and Cognate Area schedule of written work available to students

### Year Two

- August 1      ▶ Submission of Comprehensive List to Graduate Supervisor (60–80 titles)
- September 15      ▶ Last day for completion of the Comprehensive Written Examination (date determined as 10 days after start of term)
- September 25      ▶ Last day for completion of the Comprehensive Oral Examination (date to be within 10 days of completion of the written comp exam)
- November 1      ▶ Submission of first progress report to Graduate Supervisor and Graduate Studies
- April 30      ▶ Submission of final draft of Dissertation Proposal
- Summer      ▶ Registration in 6909 (Dissertation)

### Year Three and forward

- September      ▶ Annual meeting of the Dissertation Advisory Committee
- October 15      ▶ Submission of Doctoral Progress Report to Graduate Supervisor and Graduate Studies

### Year Five

- March 1      ▶ Last day for submission of dissertation for Spring Convocation (dates approximate)
- August 1      ▶ Last day for submission of dissertation for Fall Convocation (dates approximate)